END OF TERM REPORT 1997-1999

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID

DECEMBER 1999

USAID

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20523

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INTRODUCTION

This report is a summation of the work of the ACVFA during its term from September 1997 to September 1999.

The Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) was established by presidential directive in 1946. The ACVFA's mandate was to advise the administration on the relationship between the voluntary sector and the official foreign aid community. This has evolved into the present partnership in which the ACVFA continues to provide informed and constructive advice to USAID's Administrator and other U.S. Government agencies, and also works actively on a range of policy and operational issues that fall under the charges given it by the USAID Administrator. The members of the ACVFA are selected for their expertise in international development and serve as individuals, not as emissaries of their respective agencies.

This report is a summation of the work of the ACVFA during its term from September 1997 to September 1999.

Reaffirming the previous Committee's criteria, the present ACVFA, under William S. Reese, Chair, worked on timely, manageable issues deemed to have the potential to show results within the two-year term. At its first meeting and retreat in December 1997, the ACVFA identified those issues as:

■ **Streamlining the Process of Managing for Results;**

■ **The Role of Civil Society in USAID Policy; and**

■ **Non-Presence Country Policy.**

The Committee subsequently formed working groups (also referred to as subcommittees) to examine and advise the full Committee in those areas. During its term, the Committee organized four additional working groups. They addressed:

■ **Gender issues;**

■ **Strategic Planning;**

■ **Humanitarian Assistance; and**

■ **Future of Foreign Assistance.**

(The latter two were formed as an outcome of the September 1999 public meeting, and are not covered in this report).

In addition to the formally identified areas listed above, the Committee also monitors and advises on broader strategic issues that are of importance to USAID and the private voluntary organization (PVO) community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee expresses its gratitude…

SUNSHINE DIALOGUE:
OVERVIEW OF THE QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETINGS

Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, ACVFA meetings are held "in the sunshine"—that is, they are open to the public.

Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, ACVFA meetings are held "in the sunshine"—that is, they are open to the public. During its term the ACVFA held seven one-day public meetings featuring prominent speakers and panelists from USAID, the ACVFA, other agencies of the U.S. government, and other organizations. The main foci of the meetings are summarized below. Full meeting agendas can be found in Annex 1.

■ **December 18, 1997:** This meeting was primarily a planning retreat for the new ACVFA to identify issues on which to focus during its term. The discussion at the public session centered on achieving results and meeting the challenges of a changing development environment. The Assistant Administrators of USAID's geographic bureaus presented their perspectives on the context and challenges of the USAID/PVO partnership in their respective regions.

■ **March 11, 1998: Support for civil society development and achieving development results.** Plenary panels and breakout groups involving USAID staff and ACVFA experts addressed both focus topics. The civil society panel presented the various challenges facing the sector: the need for public education to establish legitimacy; the need for training to enhance effectiveness; the requirement for human and financial capacity building and sustainability; and the critical factor of

fostering greater collaboration among business partners, governments, and other nonprofit organizations. The afternoon plenary addressed USAID perspectives on achieving measurable development results. The issue of measuring intangibles (a natural follow-on from the morning's concentration on civil society) surfaced as a concern both by ACVFA members and members of the public. Afternoon break-out groups examined the implications for the USAID/PVO partnership of achieving and measuring results. The afternoon also featured the demonstration of a new USAID website, "A Guide to Results-Oriented Grants and Cooperative Agreements," developed in response to a recommendation of the previous ACVFA (http://www.info.usaid.gov/pubs/).

■ **June 10, 1998: Results reporting for external audiences.** The proceedings and public discussion at this unique gathering of stakeholders demonstrated good progress on addressing issues related to results reporting. The external stakeholders in USAID's results reporting, including Congressional staff, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the General Accounting Office (GAO), and the Inspector General's Office came together for the first time to discuss in public the strengths and weaknesses of USAID's reports under the 1993 Government Performance and Results

Act (GPRA). Two panel discussions and afternoon breakout groups grappled with the challenges inherent in collecting data, measuring progress and achieving tangible results in developing countries. In addition, participants were given an update on the Y2K challenge for government, business, and civil society.

■ **September 17, 1998: USAID/PVO partnership issues related to USAID's managing for results process and issues connected with graduation and non-presence countries.** Morning and afternoon panel discussions followed by questions and answers engaged senior USAID staff, ACVFA mem-bers, and more than 100 public participants in productive, in-depth dialogue on the focus topics. With reference to streamlining the results process, there was consensus that the goals set must feasible and reasonable, and USAID should require only data that are of direct utility to the Agency and its oversight bodies and to the program managers on the ground. The afternoon plenary and questions underlined the complexity of the issues of graduation and non-presence and the challenges related to developing a non-presence policy framework for the Agency. The topic was of special interest to PVOs that are committed to maintaining relationships with indigenous NGOs and other organizations after USAID has left.

■ **December 15, 1998: The role of civil society in development.** The morning session opened with a keynote speech on USAID's perspective on civil society, delivered by Administrator J. Brian Atwood. A panel consisting of noted experts from the academic, foundation, and civil society communities examined the contributions of civil society organizations to sustainable development; how U.S. assistance can facilitate these efforts; and necessary changes in current policies and practices. In the afternoon, participants broke into groups to discuss cooperative strategies for USAID and the PVO community to build civil society in transition countries and to suggest additional policy and procedural changes needed to effect those strategies.

■ **June 3, 1999: The future of foreign assistance in the new millennium.** A distinguished group of speakers representing Congressional staff, the foreign policy and development communities, and academia, emphasized the need to garner public and political support for foreign aid, based on clear communication with the nation. Several key questions concerning foreign aid emerged from the dialogue: how to raise public consciousness of the need for and value of foreign aid; how the foreign assistance community can best influence U.S. vision and leadership; how to balance humanitarian response and long-term U.S. interests; whether the primary focus of foreign aid should be on bilateral assistance or global and transnational issues; and whether

The afternoon plenary and questions underlined the complexity of the issues of graduation and non-presence and the challenges related to developing a non-presence policy framework for the Agency....

Ambassador Anderson highlighted some of his priorities for his tenure at USAID and talked about the major challenges facing the development community at the end of the millennium.

foreign aid can achieve development results while also serving as a foreign policy instrument.

■ **September 8, 1999: This meeting featured a keynote address by USAID's new Administrator, J. Brady Anderson, who gave his perspective on development and the role played by PVOs and NGOs.** Ambassador Anderson also highlighted some of his priorities for his tenure at USAID and talked about the major challenges facing the development community at the end of the millennium. Participants also heard progress reports from USAID officials on important and timely matters affecting private voluntary organizations working in international development. Topics included: proposed revisions to USAID's Strategic Plan and opportunities for partners to have input into the revisions; changes in results reporting; the evolving new relationship between USAID and the Department of State; foreign assistance legislation; the transition from disaster assistance to development in the Balkans and Central America; and the ACVFA-sponsored assessment of USAID's Gender Plan of Action.

The ACVFA convened for Working Group meetings and an Executive Session in March 1999 but no public meeting was held.

POLICY ISSUES:
REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUPS

The ACVFA has addressed its mandate to advise USAID on matters of policy and strategy through the efforts of five working groups:

- **Results Working Group:** Peter Reiling, Chair;

- **Civil Society Working Group:** Lester Salamon, Chair;

- **Non-Presence Country Working Group:** Robert Chase, Chair;

- **Gender Working Group:** Elise Fiber Smith, Chair; and

- **Strategic Planning Working Group:** Ted Weihe, Chair.

The working groups meet and communicate between the quarterly ACVFA meetings as well as on the day following the public session. Each working group reports back to the full Committee, which airs Working Group research and recommendations at the public sessions. The major goals and achievements of the working groups are outlined below.

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

In 1993, the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) was written into law with the goal of increasing the accountability of agencies government-wide and encouraging a focus on results, not simply process. Agencies were faced with the challenges of determining measurable indicators that demonstrate real outcomes and a wise use of tax dollars and creating performance measurement and reporting mechanisms. The importance to USAID and the ACVFA of the results issue is reflected in the fact that different aspects of managing for results have been topics of keynote addresses, plenary panels, and breakout group discussions at the ACVFA public meetings in December 1997, March 1998, June 1998, and September 1998.

The ACVFA Results Working Group committed to help USAID (1) operate more effectively under the requirements of GPRA and (2) streamline the Results Reporting and Resource Request (R4) process. The aim is to simplify the results reporting process and ensure that USAID's reports meet the needs of external stakeholders (such as Congress, the oversight agencies, and the Inspector General) as well as of the American taxpayers. The specific issues on which the Working Group focused attention were:

- Qualitative and quantitative aspects of results measurement;

- Identification of indicators that will yield meaningful results without placing burdensome restrictions on PVOs and NGOs, particularly the smaller ones;

Each working group reports back to the full Committee, which airs Working Group research and recommendations at the public sessions.

The Results Working Group surfaced a number of issues for consideration by USAID….

- The design and implementation of programs to achieve results;

- The impact of the results process on USAID's partners;

- The challenge of finding appropriate indicators, particularly for activities and programs that do not lend themselves easily to measurement (for example, capacity building); and

- The relationship between results and sustainability.

The Results Working Group conducted profitable meetings throughout the term of the ACVFA with Tom Fox, Assistant Administrator, and Dirk Dijkerman, Deputy Assistant Administrator, and the staff of the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination. The Working Group also met with Congressional, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and General Accounting Office (GAO) staff to obtain reactions to the Agency Performance Report and the Accountability Report. In an effort to move further in the process of identifying some workable common indicators, the Working Group co-sponsored with USAID's Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC), a meeting of donors and implementing partners to discuss the feasibility of common standards for performance measurement akin to the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

The Results Working Group surfaced a number of issues for consideration by USAID:

- Agency goals are sometimes over ambitious, especially given increasingly limited staffing (Operating Expense) resources. The Working Group urged the Agency to inject more realism into Missions' goals.

- USAID's reports are not being read as widely as desired because their level of detail is too great. The Working Group suggested that the Agency determine the data that are of most value to its stakeholders, implement processes to gather these data, and present material more briefly and graphically (using charts, for example).

- The R4 process is not sufficiently understood by the PVO community. USAID was urged to include partners in Agency R4 training sessions.

- The Working Group encouraged USAID to appoint a Results Ombudsman, supporting the concept in principle, but voicing a number of reservations and questions as to how such a function would operate in reality.

These recommendations are in the process of consideration and implementation by USAID.

USAID is taking steps to revise its results reporting to incorporate feedback from ACVFA and other partners.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Recognizing that indigenous civil society organizations are increasingly crucial to the achievement of sustainable development, the Civil Society Working Group reviewed existing USAID documents and met with USAID staff from various bureaus. The Group concluded (1) that the issue of civil society is not as well reflected as it could be in the Agency's Strategic Plan or in results packages; and (2) that the term "civil society" is variously defined by different bureaus in USAID, resulting in lack of consistency.

The major actions of the Civil Society Working Group have been to:

- Contribute to the process of developing a USAID civil society policy or framework, with the goal of having civil society treated more prominently in the Strategic Plan, preferably at the goal or Strategic Objective (SO) level; and

- Assist in adapting for wider Agency use the NGO Sustainability Index developed by the Europe and Eurasia (E&E) Bureau (formerly ENI, the Bureau for Europe and the New Independent States).

The principal action of the Working Group is to work with USAID to influence policy and practices toward civil society organizations. The convening of the December 1998 meeting, which addressed the role of civil society in development, was an expression of the importance the working group attached to the value of a public forum on the ways in which civil society organizations contribute to development in all sectors. The ACVFA believes that USAID can reach each of its six goals through the development of a strong civil society sector in each of the countries in which the Agency works, and by supporting civil society organizations in their development work.

The working group met with all USAID Central and Regional Bureaus to discuss current policy and then wrote its own "statement of principles" paper entitled "USAID and Civil Society: Toward a Policy Framework" (Annex 5) to use as a starting point for discussion with USAID about a possible new policy and more explicit treatment of civil society in the Agency Strategic Plan. The paper sought to clarify USAID's relationship with the broad spectrum of civil society organizations in developing and transition countries; to propose approaches and best practices that might enable USAID and the PVO community to strengthen these relationships; and to call upon USAID to make more explicit its central goal of strengthening civil society. The paper was shared with USAID bureaus, revised based on comments received, and presented at the public session of the June 1999 ACVFA Quarterly Meeting for public feedback. The Working Group continues to monitor USAID's implementation of the steps outlined in the paper.

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Existing USAID policy on "exit" is applied differently among, and some-times within, bureaus.

Planning Working Group in its dialogue with USAID on revisions to the Agency Strategic Plan that would elevate civil society in the Agency's goal structure and give it more prominence as a crosscutting issue. The revisions to the Plan will enable USAID to follow through on specific references to civil society (and other crosscutting issues) in strategic guidance to USAID Missions and in policy directives. They will also provide for appropriate indicators, accountability and tracking of civil society programming and accomplishments.

In June 1998, the Civil Society Working Group decided to address the NGO Sustainability Index of the E&E (formerly ENI) Bureau. The Index is a sectoral tool designed to examine five indicators: the legal environment; the level of participation in the policy process; organizational capacity strengthening; media development; and political culture and civil values.

The Working Group found the Index to be a very useful and interesting effort to systematize complex and highly qualitative areas. The Working Group noted that the full potential of the Index as a more widely used tool within the Agency was not being exploited. The ACVFA, through the efforts of the Working Group, provided methodological feedback aimed at enhancing the rigor of the instrument and suggestions for its adaptation for wider use throughout USAID.

NON-PRESENCE COUNTRY POLICY

The Non-Presence Country Working Group exists to identify and examine issues related to USAID's non-presence policy and the role of the ACVFA in helping the Agency to address those issues.

The Working Group met with senior staff of all USAID bureaus with operational field programs and prepared a briefing paper (Annex 6) delineating findings and observations, summarized below.

- During the past three years, the Agency perspective on non-presence has become more flexible. "Out" as applied to USAID staff does not necessarily mean that USAID-supported programs must also withdraw.

- Existing USAID policy on "exit" is applied differently among, and sometimes within, bureaus.

- Decision-making within the Agency has become more decentralized.

- While broad policy guidelines are desirable, there should be more room for flexibility in applying them.

- Studies conducted by USAID/CDIE on country graduation provide models and examples of experience; these are not, however, widely shared throughout the Agency.

- On the whole, USAID does not devote sufficient attention in its programming longer-term planning for post-graduation.

- USAID has a country-based development focus; as funds and resources decrease, tension increases between programmatic strategies and operational realities.

- Funding and management considerations drive non-presence program decision-making, but they are applied differently in the varying regional and central bureau contexts.

The Working Group concluded that there is not a consensus within USAID on policy and practices, nor does a consistent process exist for consultation with USAID stakeholders in planning for exit and defining post-presence activities. The Working Group advised USAID that there is need for (1) a policy or strategy to guide the ways in which USAID, in coordination with other U.S. agencies, prepares a country for graduation or exit; and (2) a post-presence policy to maintain and build on established relationships and protect existing investments after graduation or exit. The Group noted that appropriate USAID-supported activities in non-presence situations can be very significant in terms of U.S. foreign policy and national interests.

The Working Group provided commentary on USAID's study on country graduation and made suggestions for a policy framework to facilitate decision-making on non- and limited-presence programming. The Group suggested that such a USAID framework should, among other principles, draw attention more explicitly to the impor-tance of early consideration for USAID's post-presence legacy in planning and implementing programs in graduation or exit countries; and should address more specifically the value of a participatory approach with USAID partners.

At the March 1999 ACVFA working meeting, the formal Non-Presence Country Working Group considered this phase of its work completed, and recommended that the non-presence issue be kept on the ACVFA "watch" list. The Working Group identified two major issues to follow and commented on progress to date:

- Graduation-the Working Group has helped USAID define internal models for maintaining a legacy after graduation; and

- Non-presence accountability-should USAID resources for non-presence be limited and if so, by how much and using what criteria? How can the Agency assure that post-presence activities are cost-effective, accountable, and achieving measurable results? The Group noted that not much across-the-board progress has been made in this area.

The Group noted that appropriate USAID-supported activities in non-presence situations can be very significant in terms of U.S. foreign policy and national interests....

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The purpose of the study is to discern the value-added of the Gender Plan of Action (GPA) in systematizing USAID's ongoing efforts to institutionalize gender considerations in its activities.

GENDER ISSUES

In 1996, the former ACVFA and USAID's Global Bureau began work on a plan of action for presentation to the USAID Administrator to integrate gender considerations into all Agency programs and policies. The resulting USAID Gender Plan of Action (GPA) was announced by Administrator Atwood on March 12, 1996 at a quarterly public meeting of the ACVFA. When the present ACVFA developed its workplan in December 1997, it was agreed that the Committee would track progress of USAID's implementation of the GPA. This commitment was formalized in March 1999 by the formation of the Gender Working Group.

The Gender Working Group noted that GPA has been implemented in most areas, to wit:

- Revision of USAID's strategic framework to better reflect the key role of gender issues in development;

- Establishment of a successful women-in-development Fellows program;

- Incorporation of gender issues in new entry staff orientations and Agency technical training;

- Inclusion of language addressing gender-consciousness in the Agency's competitive assistance guidelines;

- Agreement of the Office of Women in Development to develop guidance on qualifications of Women in Development (WID) officers Agency-wide.

The Group also–
(1) identified three items in the GPA still to be implemented :

- Reform of hiring practices to include gender expertise;

- Inclusion of criteria and points for gender expertise in Requests for Proposals;

- Revision of the USAID policy paper on Women in Development; and

(2) noted that there is currently no central point of accountability within USAID for implementing the GPA.

The Gender Working Group initiated an ACVFA-sponsored, independent assessment of USAID's implementation of the GPA (Annex 7 contains the terms of reference for the assessment). The study, led by former Ambassador Sandy Vogelgesang and launched in June 1999, will include implementing organizations outside USAID (PVOs and NGOs) as well as USAID staff, in Washington and in the field. The purpose of the study is to discern the value-added of the GPA in systematizing USAID's ongoing efforts to institutionalize gender considerations in its activities. Specifically, the study will:

- Assess progress and impact to date of GPA implementation;

- Identify additional actions to be considered for further gender institutionalization; and

- Evaluate the success of the ACVFA-USAID collaboration in developing the GPA in terms of using it as a model for formulation of other USAID policies.

The final report will be delivered to USAID in February 2000 and presented at the March 2000 ACVFA quarterly public meeting in connection with USAID's plans for the United Nations' "Beijing Plus 5" special session.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Planning Working Group was formed to assist USAID in revising-thereby strengthening-the Agency's Strategic Plan (ASP). The Agency has undertaken to update the ASP a year earlier than required under GPRA be-cause, while the Plan is a legal requirement, USAID's desire is to go beyond mere compliance with the law and to create a document that will be more useful to Agency staff and outside stakeholders. The ACVFA's input has been requested to create an ASP that:

- Better reflects USAID's activities;

- Addresses weaknesses identified by Congress;

- Better reflects the experience of operating units;

- Limits the number of cross-cutting issues and treats priority crosscutting issues (civil society, gender and institutional capacity building) more comprehensively;

- Reflects more realistic goals;

- Is a better decision-making tool for programming and resource allocation;

- Stimulates debate and discussion on Agency priorities.

The ASP revision process was described in detail at the September 1999 ACVFA public meeting. Over the next few months, ACVFA and USAID will engage in dialogue on new sections of the Plan that address the three issues of most concern to ACVFA: (1) the need for a better des-cription of USAID's activities in the context of the other foreign affairs strategies; (2) the need for a more explicit framework for programming and tracking activities and results that cut across goal areas; and (3) the need for performance goals and measures that relate more closely to actions that USAID can be responsible for. ACVFA will continue to facilitate consultation with partners throughout this process.

The Strategic Planning Working Group was formed to assist USAID in revising-thereby strengthening-the Agency's Strategic Plan.

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Charles MacCormack
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Peter Reiling
Elise Smith
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Kathryn Wolford

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE (INACTIVE)

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Herschelle Challenor
Robert Chase
Peggy Curlin
James Henson
Jane Pratt
Peter Reiling
Charles MacCormack

ANNEX 3:
MEETING AGENDAS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETING – DECEMBER 18, 1997
Loy Henderson Auditorium, Department of State

AGENDA

8:30   **Welcome:** Bill Reese, ACVFA Chair

9:00   **Remarks:** Hattie Babbitt, USAID Deputy Administrator

9:30   **ACVFA Panel:** *"From a global Perspective, what forces are driving the development process?"*
     Moderator: Vivian Lowery Derryck, ACVFA and Academy for Educational Development
     Brad Smith, Vice President, Ford Foundation
     Carol Lancaster, Georgetown University and the Institute for International Economics
     Charles MacCormack, President, Save the Children

10:45   **COFFEE BREAK**

11:15   **USAID Panel:** *"What is the context for the USAID/PVO/NGO partnership? In your geographic region, what are the most important challenges to be addressed in this tripartite relationship? In light of the Committee's mandate to provide non-governmental guidance to USAID, on which issues should ACVFA focus?"*
     Moderator: Len Rogers, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Humanitarian Response
     Kelly Kammerer, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia and the Near East
     Carol Peasley, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa
     Don Pressley, Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and the New Independent States
     Mark Schneider, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

12:40   **PUBLIC MEETING ADJOURNS**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
PUBLIC MEETING - MARCH 11, 1998

Pan American Health Organization, 525 23rd Street, N.W.
Washington, DC

AGENDA

9:00   **Welcome:** Bill Reese, ACVFA Chair

9:10   **Remarks:** J. Brian Atwood, USAID Administrator

9:30   **Plenary:** *"Support for Civil Society Development"*
  Lester Salamon, Director, Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy
    Studies, Center for Civil Society Studies
  Eliana Vera, Director of International Programs, National Center for
    Nonprofit Boards
  William P. Fuller, President, The Asia Foundation
  Donald Pressley, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and the
    New Independent States

10:30 **COFFEE BREAK**

11:00 **Breakout Groups:**

  Auditorium A: **Capacity Building Issues and Challenges**
    ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Bob Chase
    USAID Presenter: Sharon Pauling, Office of Development Planning,
                Bureau for Africa
              Bobby Herman, Office of Program Coordinator
                and Strategy, Bureau for Europe and the New
                Independent States

  Auditorium C: **PVO/NGO Partnerships**
    ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Dave Brown
    USAID Presenter: John Grant, Office of Private and Voluntary
                Cooperation, Bureau for Humanitarian
                Response

  Delegates' Lounge: **Procurement and Participation Mechanisms**
    ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Lou Mitchell
    USAID Presenters: Diana Esposito, Office of Procurement, Bureau for
                Management
              Dennis Wendel, Center for Democracy and
                Governance, Bureau For Global Programs,
                Field Support and Research

2:30   **Plenary:** *"USAID Perspective on Achieving Development Results"*
  Terry Brown, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management
  Tom Fox, Assistant Administrator Bureau for Policy and Program
    Coordination

3:15 **Demonstration of a New Internet Website for USAID and Partners:**
"A Guide to Results-Oriented Grants and Cooperative Agreements"
Elise Storck, ACVFA Secretariat, Office of Private and Voluntary
Cooperation, Bureau for Humanitarian Response
Jean Horton, Office of Procurement, Bureau for Management
Maria Beebe, Team Leader and Principal Author

3:45 **Breakout Groups:** Implications for the USAID/PVO Partnership of:

• Auditorium A: **Conceptualizing and Articulating Results**
ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Kathryn Wolford
USAID Presenter: Karl Schwartz, Office of Program Coordination,
Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination

• Auditorium C: **Program and Project Design to Achieve Results**
ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Ted Weihe
USAID Presenter: Tony Pryor, Office of Sustainable Development,
Bureau for Africa

• Delegates' Lounge: **Measuring Results**
ACVFA Moderator/Presenter: Peter Reiling
USAID Presenters: Gretchen Bloom, Office of Strategic and Economic
Analysis, Bureau for Asia and the Near East
Elizabeth Baltimore, Office of Results Oriented Reengineering,
Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination

5:00 **ADJOURN**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETING - JUNE 10, 1998

Hotel Washington 15th & Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington Room

AGENDA

9:00 **Welcome:** William Reese, ACVFA Chair
Keynote: William Greenwalt, Senate Governmental Affairs Committee

9:10 **Panel:** *"Reporting Needs of USAID's External Audiences"*
Jeffrey Rush, Inspector General for USAID
Jess T. Ford, Associate Director, International Relations & Trade GAO
Michael Casella, USAID Examiner, OMB
Mark Kirk, House International Relations Committee Staff Questions
and Answers

11:30 **Update on Year 2000 Challenge for Government, Business and Civil Society**
John Streufert, IRM

12:00 **LUNCH**

1:30 **Remarks:** J. Brian Atwood, USAID Administrator

2:00 **Panel (USAID):** *"Missions' Role in USAID's System to Report Results to External Audiences"*
Rose Mari Depp, Mission Director, Zimbabwe
Thomas Hobgood, Acting Mission Director, Ghana
Dirk Dijkerman, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Policy and
Program Coordination

3:15 **COFFEE BREAK**

3:30 **Breakout Groups:**
• Room 331: Using Reported Results Information for Public Outreach
• Room 334: Implications of GPRA on PVO Results Reporting to
USAID
• Washington Rm: Results Reporting for Program Management

5:00 **ADJOURN**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETING - SEPTEMBER 17, 1998

Hotel Washington 15th & Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington Room

AGENDA

9:00   **Welcome:** William Reese, ACVFA Chair

9:15   **Opening Remarks:** Ambassador Harriet C. Babbitt, Deputy Adminstrator, USAID

9:45   **Panel:** *"Managing for Results: Responding to Partner Input"*
     William Reese, ACVFA Chair
     Jill Buckley, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Legislative & Public
       Affairs
     Terrence Brown, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Management
     Dirk Dijkerman, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy &
       Program Coordination
     Carol Peasley, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa

10:45   **COFFEE BREAK**

11:00   **Panel Continues** – Questions & Answers/Audience Comments

12:00   **LUNCH**

1:30   **Panel:** *"Issues Related to Graduation & Non-Presence Countries"*
     Robert Chase, Chair, ACVFA Non-Presence Countries Subcommittee
     Frank Martin, Program Officer, Center for Development Information
       & Evaluation, Bureau for Policy & Program Coordination and Team
       Leader of the CDIE Graduation Study
     Michael Crosswell, International Economist, Bureau for Policy &
       Program Coordination

     Questions & Answers/Audience Comments

3:00   **COFFEE BREAK**

3:15   **Subcommittee Meetings**
     • Room 331: Non-Presence Countries
     • Room 334: Results/Indicators/Procurement
     • Federal Room: Civil Society/Partnership

5:15   **ADJOURN**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
PUBLIC MEETING - DECEMBER 15, 1998

"THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEVELOPMENT"

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)
525 - 23rd Street, N.W. – Auditorium A

AGENDA

8:45   **Opening and Welcome:** William Reese, ACVFA Chair

9:00   **Keynote:** Thomas H. Fox, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy
and Program Coordination, USAID
*"The Role of Civil Society in Development: USAID's Perspective" and
Update on USAID's Worldwide Mission Director's Conference*

9:45   **Panel Discussion:** *"How do civil society organizations contribute to
sustainable development, how can U.S. development assistance
facilitate these contributions, and what needs to be changed in current
policies and practice?"*
> *Moderator:* Dr. Lester Salamon, Chair, ACVFA Civil Society Working
> Group
> Dr. Norman Uphoff, Director, International Agriculture Program,
> Cornell University
> Dr. Ramon Daubon, Associate, The Kettering Foundation
> Dr. Michael Woolcock, Social Scientist, Development Research
> Group, The World Bank
> Ros Tennyson, Director, Learning and Leadership Programmes, The
> Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum (BLF)
> Dr. Charles Akinola, Country Director, Technoserve/Nigeria

11:45   **LUNCH**

1:30   **PVO Discussion Groups:** *"How can USAID and U.S. PVOs help build
civil society in developing and transition countries? What approaches
have worked best? What problems have surfaced and how might these
be solved?"*
> *Discussion Leaders:*
> Kate Raftery, Acting President, Parnters of the Americas
> (Auditorium A)
> Cherri Waters, Vice President, InterAction (Room B)
> William Witting, Director, Agribusiness Volunteer Program, Citizens
> Network for Foreign Affairs (Room C)

3:30   **Groups Report Back:** Dr. Lester Salamon, Moderator (Auditorim A)
(USAID Administrator, J. Brian Atwood will participate briefly)

4:30   **ADJOURN**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETING - JUNE 3, 1999

Ronald Reagan Building Amphitheatre
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC

AGENDA

8: 30   **Welcome:** Carol Lancaster, ACVFA Vice-Chair

8:45   **Plenary Session:** *"Whither Foreign Aid? Visions of Foreign Assistance in the New Millennium"*
      Moderators:
      • Carol Lancaster, ACVFA Vice Chair
      • Jane Pratt, ACVFA Member

      Speakers:
      • Diana Ohlbaum, Minority Professional Staff Member, Subcommittee on International Economic Policy, Export and Trade Promotion, Senate Foreign Relations Committee
      • L. Craig Johnstone, Senior Vice President, International Economic and National Security Affairs, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
      • David Dollar, Research Manager, Development Research Group, The World Bank

10:15   **BREAK**

10:30   **Plenary Session Continues:**
      • J. Bryan Hehir, Professor of the Practice in Religion and Society, Harvard University Divinity School & Weatherhead Center for International Affairs; Counselor to Catholic Relief Services
      • Thomas H. Fox, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination, USAID

11:30   **Break-out Groups:** Discussion of Each Speaker's Vision and Development of Recommendations for a U.S. Foreign Assistance Strategy for the 21st Century (Hemisphere A – Hemisphere B – Classroom A – Classroom B - Amphitheater Balcony)

12:45   **LUNCH**

2:00   **Plenary Session:** Recommendations from Break-Out Groups

3:00   **Plenary Panel:** ACVFA Working Paper *"USAID and Civil Society: Toward a Policy Framework"*
      Moderator: Leaster Salamon, Chair, ACVFA Civil Society Subcommittee
      Panelists: Elise Smith, ACVFA Member; William Fuller, ACVFA Member; Cherri Waters, Vice President, InterAction; Tinatin Khidasheli, Georgian Young Lawyer's Association

3:30   Comments, Discussion of Working Paper with audience participation.

5:00   Reports from ACVFA's Strategic Planning and Gender Working Groups

5:30   **ADJOURN**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
QUARTERLY PUBLIC MEETING SEPTEMBER 8, 1999

U.S. Navy Memorial Visitors Center
Arleigh and Roberta Burke Theater
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC

AGENDA

9:00   **Welcome:** William Reese, ACVFA Chair

9:10   **Keynote Address with Q&A:** Ambassador J. Brady Anderson, USAID
          Administrator

10:00   **USAID's Strategic Plan:** Discussion of USAID's Goal Reviews, Proposed
          Revisions to the Plan, and Opportunities for Partner Input
            Mike Crosswell, Acting Director, Office of Policy Development and
              Coordination, Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination, USAID
            Dirk Dijkerman, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy
              and Program Coordination, USAID
            Ted Weihe, Chair, ACVFA Strategic Planning Working Group

11:00   **COFFEE BREAK**

11:15   **USAID's Streamlined Results Reporting:** Impact on Partners
            Tony Pryor, Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination, USAID
            Olivier Carduner, Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination,
              USAID

12:15   **LUNCH**

1:30   **The USAID-Department of State Relationship:** A Status Report on the
          State-AID Working Group and An Update on the 90-Day Humanitarian
          Assistance Review
            Thomas H. Fox, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy and
              Program Coordination, USAID
            Anne C. Richard, Director Resources, Plans and Policy, Department of
              State
            Ambassador James H. Michel, USAID Counselor
            Morton H. Halperin, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Department of
              State

3:00   **Legislative Update**
            Suzanne Palmieri, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for
              Legislative And Public Affairs, USAID

3:30   **BREAK**

3:45 **Transition from Disasters:** Update on Balkan Reconstruction and
Hurricanes Mitch and Georges Rehabilitation Efforts
Donald L. Pressley, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Europe and
the New Independent States, USAID
Mark L. Schneider, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Latin America
and The Caribbean, USAID

4:30 **Assessment of USAID's Gender Plan of Action**
Elise Smith, Chair, ACVFA Gender Working Group
Ambassador Sandy Vogelgesang, Assessment Team Leader

5:00 **ADJOURNMENT**

ANNEX 4:
RESULTS SUBCOMMITTEE
REVIEW OF ISSUES

The Results Subcommittee made the decision to pursue its work through a dialogue with Agency staff on results issues. The Subcommittee appreciates the openness and commitment demonstrated by the Agency, particularly the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination.

The Subcommittee has directed its efforts to two main issues:

1. **Efficiency and cost effectiveness of results reporting in general and of the current USAID results reporting process specifically.**

   The PVOs spend many hours and hard-won dollars to manage and continually adapt their organizations' monitoring and evaluation systems to meet the needs of their assorted constituencies. Their goal is to balance the need for data with the opportunity cost of generating it. Every dollar spent on results reporting is a dollar not spent on programs. The Subcommittee's concerns included:

   ■ what is collected and how efficiently,

   ■ the cost effectiveness of the system,

   ■ changes to the reporting system (the Results Review and Resource Request, or R4), and

   ■ most importantly, how the information is used.

2. **What the end consumers of USAID's results reporting actually use and how they use it. This effort focused on how the GPRA and the external audiences shape the Agency's performance measurement system.**

1. EFFICIENCY AND COST EFFECTIVENESS: USAID'S PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

With regard to USAID's results reporting process, the Subcommittee focused on various aspects of the Agency's performance measurement system, from issues related to the Agency Strategic Plan to training in Managing for Results. These are described below.

Lofty Goals vs. Limited Resources

Early in their work the Subcommittee members identified the Agency's Strategic Plan as part of the issue with the Agency's performance measurement system. The Subcommittee stressed the importance of rigor and pragmatism. Impact must be targeted and it needs to be commensurate with resources. It was noted that too many objectives with too little money might mean falling short of the "critical mass" needed to achieve any one objective.

In light of scarce resources, the Subcommittee expressed concern that the Agency's strategic objectives and intermediate results are at a level that is too ambitious. Often there is no causal connection between the lofty goals and what USAID funds. The June 1998 panel made up of Congressional, OMB and GAO staff agreed that USAID's goals are an issue.

The subcommittee suggested that, to the degree possible, PVOs (and other partners) with implementation experience be included in the discussions on strategic objectives and intermediate results as the objectives are being set. Consultation on indicators is essential but can be problematic, even ineffective, if consultations have not been held at the strategic planning stage.

The Subcommittee suggested that ACVFA support the Agency's efforts to bring Agency and Mission strategic objectives down to reality without losing a far-sighted emphasis on results. USAID's Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination is revising the Agency Strategic Plan to meet ACVFA's concerns.

Results of Results

The Subcommittee's key question is whether the Agency's approach to Managing for Results is actually leading to results for those whom we are dedicated to helping. As a large donor, the Agency collects a great amount of performance information from its monitoring and evaluation systems and has access to even more information from partners and other donors. The Subcommittee stressed the importance of working with USAID on ways to evaluate whether or not this is taking place and suggested that USAID develop a system to capture and disseminate best practices using its own and other development organizations' experience.

The Subcommittee also raised some practical considerations:

■ USAID must weigh the marginal cost of measuring results against the marginal benefit. Money spent on measurement is not going into the program. How is the tradeoff measured?

■ Has USAID considered the effect of short-term measuring on PVO/NGO partnerships and sustainability?

■ How does USAID use the results reported by partners? Do good results correlate with increased support from USAID?

The Subcommittee has raised the Results of Results issue a number of times in the context of whether results are having the intended impact and also whether they are leading to increased support and funding for foreign assistance. The Subcommittee has not, however, systematically addressed the best practices issue. The practical considerations have been frequently addressed in the context of other issues, but continue to be of primary importance. These are perhaps the key outstanding issues for the Subcommittee.

Revised Guidance for the Results Review and Resource Request (R4)

The R4, as it is known, is USAID's system for operating units (USAID Missions and offices) to report on the results of their programs and to base their request for resources on what they have learned about their progress. The Agency consulted the ACVFA, through the Results Subcommittee, on revising the R4 guidance.

The Subcommittee concluded that the R4 has been streamlined in many ways, as shown by a new guidance document for R4 preparation and review. The Subcommittee welcomed the streamlining and applauded PPC's responsiveness to both internal and external "stocktaking" reflected in these efforts. There remained some confusion about one important simplification: the frequency of R4 preparation. Agency staff clarified that preparation of R4s remains annual, but the formal process of R4 review by USAID/ Washington changed to once every three years (at most three years between reviews). Operating units were also urged to drop any indicators not useful for their own management.

While pleased with the R4 streamlining, the Subcommittee remains concerned that the streamlining may not yet have affected partners.

Performance Measurement Standards

Throughout the two years of dialogue between USAID and the Subcommittee, there was much discussion of how to determine indicators of good performance, to find the most reasonable ways to measure achievements in each sector, and how to attribute those achievements to USAID-funded activities. In effect, the goal may be to arrive at the non-financial equivalent for performance measurement of the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)—the development and maintenance of which may be a good analog or inspiration for the task ahead for development practitioners. PPC suggested a gathering of expertise/experience from both implementers and donors of several nations to work toward formulation of a harmonized performance measurement system, which can be the framework for sector-specific identification of indicators and measurement methods.

ACVFA offered its support in promoting and designing such a meeting, which ACVFA and PPC co-convened in June 1999. Participants from large and small PVOs, the World Bank, USAID, the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Professional Services Council, and the Independent Sector's Measures Project met and opened a dialogue on harmonizing standards and terminology.

The Subcommittee's role in the Standards for Performance Measurement meeting comprised the most concerted effort to work with the Agency to address issues of efficiency and cost effectiveness of shared efforts in performance measurement.

Training in Managing for Results

At its September 1998 meeting, ACVFA recommended that USAID make a comprehensive effort to train staff and partners in Managing for Results. USAID has begun to do so. ACVFA applauds this effort, with one concern—that is, that including partners in training may have the unwelcome effect of delaying the full coverage of USAID staff. PPC also informed the Subcommittee of the initiation of educational sessions for senior managers on a variety of key topics . The Subcommittee agreed that this is essential for engaging the whole Agency in dealing with the operational constraints to Managing for Results. This may also be an efficient use of training resources to speed the spread of understanding and consistent guidance from the Agency's top management.

The Subcommittee also commended the Agency on the Website as an interim form of communication.

The Operations Governance Team

Subcommittee members praised the Operations Governance Team as a formal and confidential mechanism jointly led by PPC and the Bureau for Management for addressing a variety of operational issues related to Managing for Results. Started in April 1998 and drawing issues from the Stocktaking exercise, the ACVFA's 1997 Assessment of the USAID-PVO Partnership, and other sources, this team has the responsibility to provide clarity, oversight and impetus for resolution of operational issues within USAID and between USAID and its partners (such as partner consultation in setting Mission strategic objectives).

It was reported to the Subcommittee that new issues can be raised with the Team and current issues can be commented on by e-mailing the Ops. Governance Team at opsg@usaid.gov. The Subcommittee expressed concern, however, that this team cannot function as a performance ombudsman, since it does not have the staffing for individualized casework to resolve specific problems.

The Subcommittee suggested that:

1. The Operations. Governance Team should proactive in seeking PVO input on issues (such as the Team has done on the issue of clarifying roles and composition of the Extended Strategic Objective Team vs. the Core Strategic Objective Team).

2. The Teams should publicize it role and activities more widely, such as by publishing an article in InterAction's newsletter *Monday Developments*.

3. PPC should explore with partners the best scope of work and positioning within the agency for the role of a Performance Ombudsman to ensure that it has complete confidentiality and sufficient "clout" to get problems resolved and to enforce equitable

compliance with USAID policies. ACVFA would work with PPC and the Team to achieve full staffing of the ombudsman function.

2. REPORTING TO END CONSUMERS

The Results Subcommittee expressed concern about the extent to which the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) seemed to drive the Agency's Annual Performance Report and, to some extent, the entire Managing for Results system. A number of specific questions and concerns surfaced:

■ The critical mission is to define the reason why the American people don't understand the value of foreign aid. Results should be communicated in terms the American people can identify with and that convey the national interest and humanitarian interests they support.

■ What does Congress really need in the way of results measurement? Is USAID asking for more than Congress ever intended?

■ Are there people on the Hill who will be influenced by this reporting? How detailed does it have to be? If the current system does meet their needs, is there a more cost-effective way to produce what is needed?

The Subcommittee organized major meetings with participation from congressional staff, the Office of Management and Budget, the General Accounting Office, and USAID's Inspector General in June 1998 and June 1999. Through this process, the Subcommittee obtained a better understanding of what prompted the GPRA and a better understanding of what level of reporting these audiences want and use. The Subcommittee was surprised by the level of the concern expressed by the congressional staff representative about the financial management issues and how they undercut the credibility of the Agency's program performance reporting.

The Subcommittee's findings on the Agency's reporting to these audiences were:

■ the Annual Performance Reports are a great starting point and improving each year;

■ the performance goals are too general to be useful and the data are too macro level to be associated with USAID programs;

■ some audiences prefer more detail and some want less—those that want more use other reporting formats and bypass the annual performance reports;

■ more evaluation is needed to get at the hard-to-answer questions, especially in areas where hard data is difficult to collect;

■ the audiences prefer less text and more charts.

END OF TERM REPORT

The Subcommittee's suggestions were that USAID should:

1. forcefully address the financial management issue;

2. regularly solicit feedback from key oversight groups and congressional staff, establishing a systematic feedback loop; and

3. cut back the Annual Performance Report to a more manageable size and digestible format with more data and less text (particularly, omitting text that might be considered "puffed up").

ANNEX 5:
CIVIL SOCIETY WORKING GROUP:
POLICY FRAMEWORK

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID

USAID AND CIVIL SOCIETY:
TOWARD A POLICY FRAMEWORK

Exposure Draft

Washington, D.C. March 5, 1999

The following are some initial considerations that the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACFVA) believes should be considered in the development of a more explicit USAgency for International Development (USAID) policy towards indigenous civil society organizations. These observations are offered not as final conclusions of a full-fledged policy development process, but rather as initial premises generated from the experience of ACVFA members from which such a policy process could usefully take off.

1. CIVIL SOCIETY IS IMPORTANT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF USAID OBJECTIVES.

The past 20 years have witnessed a massive upsurge of organized private voluntary activity in many of the countries in which USAID is active. The resulting organizations hold immense promise for contributing productively to USAID's objectives across a broad front. Past experience has demonstrated convincingly that neither governments nor markets on their own can accomplish the goals that USAID seeks, whether in the development field narrowly construed or more broadly. Nobel Prize-winning economist Kenneth Arrow explained why more than a quarter of a century ago when he noted that "it can plausibly be argued that much of the economic backwardness in the world can be explained by the lack of mutual confidence." Because of their relatively small scale, their grassroots ties, their ability to mobilize private initiative on behalf of public purposes, and their reputation for trustworthiness, nonprofit, nongovernmental or civil society organizations are uniquely positioned to foster such confidence and trust and to mobilize citizen involvement in the pursuit of a wide range of developmental objectives, from basic economic growth to environmental protection, from health and nutrition to gender equity, and from agricultural growth to democratic development broadly conceived.

Attention to civil society organizations has become particularly important in recent years. New political space has recently opened up for these organizations in many parts of the world, especially in countries in transition to market economies and democratic forms of government. At the same time, some governments have backed away from their central roles in development, creating gaps that civil society organizations have been called on to fill. As governments have become more willing to work with other actors, moreover, partnerships between government agencies and civil society organizations have become increasingly possible, creating important additional opportunities to achieve development goals. In short, civil society organizations are increasingly critical contributors to the achievement of many of the objectives that USAID seeks to promote. As such, they seem deserving of USAID attention and support.

2. USAID HAS A LONG HISTORY OF INVOLVEMENT WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN DEVELOPING REGIONS, BUT NEW OPPORTUNITIES EXIST THAT CALL FOR NEW APPROACHES.

USAID has long been a pioneer in the promotion of civil society organizations and it continues this tradition today. But new opportunities now exist to expand the range of

civil society organizations with which the agency works, to extend the role of such organizations, and to increase the contribution they can make to the development process broadly conceived. To take full advantage of these opportunities, however, USAID may have to adjust its processes, increase its tolerance for risk, and expand its repertoire of responses in the light of local civil society realities.

3. CIVIL SOCIETY IS DIVERSE.

The range of organizations embraced within the civil society sector in most countries is exceedingly wide. It includes groups engaged in political advocacy, education, health care, microenterprise development, social services and recreation as well as the representation of business, professional, neighborhood, ethnic, gender, or other groups. Indeed, few fields in which USAID is active are not served by at least some civil society organizations. What is more, these organizations take many different forms, reflecting different social and cultural traditions. They can therefore not be squeezed into a single mold. Yet these entities nevertheless share some common features, five of which seem especially important:

(a) They are *organizations*, in that they are formally or informally organized around shared purposes;

(b) They are *nongovernmental*, and so not part of the state apparatus;

(c) They are *not-for-profit*, in that they do not exist primarily to distribute profits to their owners;

(d) They are *self-governing*, rather than externally controlled; and

(e) They are *voluntary* both in the sense of being non-compulsory and in the sense of voluntary involvement in their governance or operations.

While not all types of civil society organizations may be relevant to USAID's mission, a considerable number clearly are. For example:

■ *Small business development.* Accion and its NGO partners in Latin America have made small loans available to hundreds of thousands of small entrepreneurs for whom capital was otherwise not available. The success of these civil society organizations is reshaping commercial banking systems in many countries.

■ *Disaster relief.* The Mother Teresa Society in Kosovo has made possible the distribution of external aid from many countries. Some civil society organizations emphasize carrying out disaster relief operations in ways that strengthen local civil society resources to respond in the future.

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■ *Empowerment of women.* The 1000-member Tanzanian African Women Leaders in Agriculture and the Environment is helping to improve access by women farmers, who produce the vast majority of the food that Africans consume, to the agricultural supplies, credit, and information they need.

■ *Irrigation system maintenance.* Civil society water user associations in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka have been organized to maintain and expand irrigation systems, often producing system improvements and performance far surpassing the prior governmental programs.

■ *Advocacy and citizen education.* The Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) in Zambia and the Association for Development Agencies of Bangladesh (ADAB) have helped educate citizens to participate in democratic elections, and in the process build awareness and institutions that will support future democratization initiatives in their countries.

Clearly, a too rigid or narrow definition of what constitutes an appropriate type of civil society partner for USAID programs can be self-defeating. Different civil society organizations will be relevant to different kinds of development programs, so the range of civil society actors considered relevant must be related to the specific program objectives being sought. Taken together, these organizations can greatly increase the information and resources available for development efforts, and deepen the commitment to the sustainabilility of development efforts.

4. THE CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR REMAINS FRAGILE IN MOST DEVELOPING REGIONS AND WOULD BENEFIT FROM BROAD-GAUGED STRENGTHENING OF ITS ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS.

To take full advantage of the contributions that civil society organizations can make to the development process, some basic strengthening of the sector and its critical support institutions is needed. Small investments in strategically important institutions can yield large increments in development impact. Such investments could usefully include:

■ Training and capacity-building for individual organizations and, especially, for the support organizations that serve the sector as a whole;

■ Support for effective civil society coalitions that enable information-sharing and joint action on issues that affect the sector as a whole;

■ Capacity building with advocacy organizations that support critical rights and responsibilities in the democratization process;

■ Technical advice and endowments for civil society resource organizations that can channel material resources to innovative grassroots initiatives;

■ Strengthening accountability mechanisms within the civil society sector; and

■ Direct funding to indigenous civil society organizations themselves to foster their development while longer term resources are put in place.

5. INVESTMENTS ARE ALSO NEEDED IN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN WHICH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS OPERATE.

In many countries institutions of the state and the market view civil society with considerable skepticism or outright hostility. USAID programs can be designed to foster institutions external to the sector that foster its effective participation in development initiatives, often in cooperation with business and government. Such investments might include:

■ Improvements in the legal and regulatory environment in which civil society organizations operate;

■ Expansion of public awareness and support for civil society organizations

■ Establishment of mechanisms that encourage cooperation across sectors, thereby combining the grassroots links of civil society organizations, the public reach of government agencies, and the efficiency and resources of business actors to maximize the pursuit of development goals;

■ Promotion of philanthropic institutions and private giving for development purposes;

6. USAID ALREADY INVESTS IN MANY CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITIES, BUT A CLEARER ARTICULATION OF AGENCY POLICY TOWARDS CIVIL SOCIETY AGENCIES COULD IMPROVE PROGRAM IMPACTS.

■ USAID is actively engaged in civil society programming in many regions. Indeed, an implicit pro-civil society policy already exists within the agency. However, this policy has not yet been made explicit, so civil society initiatives remain diffuse and not reinforced, little record of accomplishments has been maintained, and opportunities for agency-wide learning from experience remain unrealized.

■ To take better advantage of the opportunities in this area, USAID should articulate a clearer expression of agency policy towards indigenous civil society organizations. Among the items that might usefully be considered in such a policy statement are the following:

 – Clarification and broadening of USAID's *definition* of civil society organizations to take better account of the considerable diversity that exists, and the numerous ways in which civil society organizations can contribute to USAID's goals;

– Identification of civil society strengthening as a major objective of USAID activity;

– The development of a civil society index along the lines pioneered by the ENI Bureau to measure progress in achieving this objective; and

– The development of guidelines to encourage national governments and U.S. PVOs to involve indigenous NGOs in all programs supported by USAID, with the goal of enhancing the indigenous capacity to carry these efforts out in the future.

7. TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A POLICY WILL REQUIRE ACTION ON AT LEAST FOUR FRONTS:

(a) *Programmatic – **to ensure that civil society concerns are adequately reflected in USAID programming. This could involve the following:***

■ Increased activity aimed at strengthening not just individual organizations but the civil society sector as a whole, including capacity building, the promotion of accountability mechanisms, the creation of an enabling legal environment, and the promotion of increased public understanding and support for this sector;

■ Encouragement of greater direct dealings between USAID missions and indigenous civil society organizations; and

■ Encouragement of intersectoral partnerships involving the civil society sector, government, and business.

(b) *Procedural – **to adjust USAID procedures in ways that take better account of local civil society realities. This could involve:***

■ Clarification of the assistance instruments appropriate for dealings with local civil society organizations, with a clear preference for cooperative agreements instead of contracts wherever possible; and

■ Active experimentation with other vehicles for promoting an active civil society sector, such as locally managed endowment funds to support indigenous civil society organizations.

(c) *Organizational – **to enhance the salience of civil society programming within the agency and fix responsibility for it. Steps here might include:***

■ Creation of an information system that can better track USAID involvement with civil society organizations; and

■ Identification of an institutional home for general civil society policy and programming within USAID.

(d) *Financial – **to ensure a reasonable flow of USAID resources to the indigenous civil society sector**.*

8. MORE FORMAL MECHANISMS SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED FOR INDIGENOUS CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION INPUT TO USAID ON A CONTINUING BASIS.

Civil society organizations can provide critical input to improve the operation of USAID programs across a broad front. Maintaining contact between the agency and relevant civil society actors at all levels is key to this ongoing input. Possible mechanisms include:

■ Regular contacts between USAID missions and national civil society associations or coalitions relevant to particularly important programs;

■ Joint assessment processes, such as the ENI NGO Sustainability Index, that enable missions and civil society representatives to jointly assess current situations and needs, particularly in comparison to other countries;

■ Support for regular regional or international gatherings to assess the roles of civil society organizations, their impacts on development initiatives, and their needs for capacity-building support; and

■ Establishment of some regular mechanism for indigenous civil society input into USAID policy, either through participation on ACVFA or through a parallel advisory mechanism.

Where there are significant tensions between civil society organizations and government agencies, missions may have to be cautious about their relations with civil society organizations. But the development potential inherent in the rapid rise of civil society actors in many countries calls for increased attention even in such circumstances.

9. AS PART OF ITS GENERAL REVIEW OF POLICY IN THIS AREA, USAID COULD USEFULLY FIND WAYS TO PROMOTE THE IMPORTANT NEW RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE TAKING SHAPE BETWEEN INDIGENOUS CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND U.S.-BASED PVOS.

The expansion of civil society organizations in the South is leading to a new division of labor in which Southern organizations increasingly focus on grass-roots development activity, advocacy, service provision, and local sector support functions and Northern organizations assume more of an enablement role focusing on capacity-building, technology transfer, and development education. USAID has developed a wide range of relationships with both Northern and Southern civil society organizations, but the emerging new relationship between these organizations needs greater strategic management by USAID to ensure that US PVOs support the further empowerment and enablement of indigenous organizations. To do so, the agency could usefully:

- Include in any new policy statement on civil society oganizations an explicit recognition of this differentiation of roles between Northern and Southern nonprofit organizations;

- Suggest to Missions that grants to US PVOs normally include a Southern civil society organization capacity-building component;

- Continue USAID's support for the "International Forum on Capacity-Building for Southern NGOs" and encourage annual meetings of this Forum at the regional level;

- Increase the use of umbrella grant programs under which US PVOs work with groups of Southern NGOs in cooperative activities.

CONCLUSION

The civil society sector has clearly come of age in most of the countries where USAID is active. These organizations have important contributions to make to the achievement of USAID's mission. To take full advantage of these contributions, USAID could usefully develop a more explicit policy to guide agency actions toward this set of institutions. We earnestly urge the agency to take this step and hope the thoughts offered here will prove useful in helping to frame some of the issues this policy should address.

ANNEX 6:
NON-PRESENCE COUNTRIES:
FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON VOLUNTARY FOREIGN AID
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NON-PRESENCE COUNTRIES
CONSULTATIONS WITH USAID OPERATIONAL BUREAUS ON USAID
NON-PRESENCE POLICY: FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS**

ACVFA's Subcommittee on Non-Presence Countries met with senior staff of all USAID Bureaus with operational field programs to discuss their approaches to and perspectives concerning USAID policy on planning and implementing activities in countries without USAID direct staff presence, whether through "graduation" or "phase-out". This memorandum offers a brief Bureau-by-Bureau discussion of these consultations, followed by a summary of the Subcommittee's overall findings and observations.

I. BUREAU CONSULTATIONS

Bureau for Africa (AFR)

Traditionally, the Bureau for Africa has not approached country programming in a time-limited fashion: to do so is difficult in the African developmental context. Over the past decade, AFR has carried out a series of Mission closures, primarily in response to external factors. As part of the first series of closures, AFR developed a Small Country Strategy that permitted the continuation of limited USAID-supported activities that could be implemented in the absence of USAID direct-hire personnel. These included some training activities and participation in various regional programs where justified, as well as continued support of Peace Corps programs and small grants under the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund. In the mid-90's, ten USAID programs were closed, the majority in West Africa. While precipitated in major part by operating expense constraints, decisions were based on a variety of factors including poor developmental progress and prospects and unsatisfactory bilateral relationships, as well as funding and management constraints. Subsequent "closure rounds" set target dates for closure based on the "graduation status" of several countries, or responded in some cases to coup d'etats. To save operating expenses, the West Africa Regional Support Office also was closed.

AFR has taken a number of steps to ameliorate the impact of mission closings and maintain key capacities in non-presence countries. These include maintenance of Famine Early Warning Systems activities, continuation of some PL 480 Title II programs, design of a Regional Health Program to meet continuing needs in health/family planning/AIDS, and implementation of a Regional Environmental Program for countries in the Congo Basin. In Southern Africa, where several more advanced bilateral programs were closed, AFR established a Southern Regional Office, with the objective of supporting a robust regional program, while maintaining bilateral programs in the neediest countries of the

region. Basically, in Africa the USAID closure process has been driven by external factors. The Bureau's effort has been to manage this process as effectively as possible. AFR has begun to think much more regionally with respect to its programs, and is seeking to strengthen long-term regional relationships.

Bureau for Europe and New Independent States (ENI)

The ENI Bureau program has been viewed as transitional from the outset, a theme that is incorporated in its authorizing legislation. Unlike other USAID Bureaus, ENI's basic approach has not been driven by management concerns regarding operating expenses and staff numbers (though it has been impacted by them); ENI brings its own perspective to bear in its approach to graduation. The Bureau has developed a rating system that ranks all countries from those closest to graduation on down, based on the application of agreed criteria, taking into account both economic reforms and democratic freedoms. ENI has established program objective teams that, among other things, look at "graduation threshold criteria" for each of the Bureau's strategic objectives that pertains to a specific country. Each criterion must meet clearly elaborated standards, and be measurable at reasonable cost within a reasonable time. The Bureau assesses the standing of each country against the established criteria each year, as part the R4 (Results Review and Resource Request) process. Graduation target dates reflect this process, but the importance of qualitative judgmental factors is recognized, as well as the role of unpredictable changes in the country context. The transitional process is usually designed to take place over a three year period but when targets are set, the intention is that the process be flexible, using the established criteria as a means of assuring that decision-making is informed and knowledgeable.

In certain cases, regional and post-presence activities are possible and are approved on a case by case basis. Three areas where post-presence activities have priority are:

(1) building civil society, where the role of NGOs, civic associations, and other people-based organizations is of recognized importance;

(2) environmental activities, where ENI sees a continuing U.S. role, in particular drawing on the experience of the U.S.-Asia Environmental Partnership; and

(3) financial markets, given the weakness of existing financial systems. All three areas are viewed as potential USAID legacies that could be supported without the need for USAID in-country presence.

ENI's intent is to move increasingly from traditional technical assistance to supporting a partnership-based approach that can endure over the longer term. The importance of leaving sustainable institutional relationships behind is recognized. Some degree of consistency is desirable with respect to non-presence activities, but any policy must be general enough to permit adaptation to the significantly different country and regional contexts.

Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)

LAC attempts to work within Agency policy as embodied in non-presence guidelines drafted in 1994 by the Policy Bureau (PPC). LAC's regional programs often include non-presence countries, with certain limitations. Specifically, LAC looks at how resources or partners in non-presence countries can help USAID in countries where it has a presence, e.g., the Participa civil society project, and the Partners of the Americas hemispheric project. Certain subregional projects also include the participation of non-presence countries, e.g., Belize and Costa Rica, where cross-border impact or economies of scale can be achieved through training, advisory services, conferences, etc. Much of what LAC does deals with issues involving the hemisphere as a whole, e.g., free trade, biodiversity, and HIV/AIDS where participation of non-presence or limited presence countries is appropriate. Over the past several years, a consensus has formed that development can best be supported at the regional level, and that in so doing, "non-presence" countries must be included, e.g., support of free trade calls for Chile's participation.

LAC has not encountered significant problems in securing Agency approval of these programs. As long as the activities fall within LAC's Agency-approved strategic objectives, they can be approved by the Bureau itself. The magnitude of activities in LAC non-presence countries is, however, very limited: they total just over $7 million out of a total LAC program of roughly $600 million. All such activities have regional impact or a regional rationale; none are solely national activities.

With respect to implementing modalities, LAC has been able to operate effectively in limited- or non-presence countries through NGO and PVO partners. Examples include The Nature Conservancy's biodiversity program, the Brazil population program, and the street children program. In certain cases, working through NGOs is preferable to direct USAID implementation. A key factor making this possible is Latin America's strong and well-developed NGO sector, which includes effective partnerships and networks, many of them developed over the years in cooperation with USAID and its partners. The model of a one-person USAID or U.S. development representative or attache would appear to make sense in countries where there are limited bilateral activities and where there are effective PVO networks or other such institutions. Endowments can also be a good way to maintain a U.S. presence in the absence of a USAID mission, but it is difficult to generalize as to the most effective mode; LAC has 11 endowments of various types. Overall USAID non-presence policy should be flexible, approaching the issue in the context of overall regional development objectives.

Bureau for Asia and the Near East (ANE)

USAID's non-presence policy of several years ago is now outdated, from ANE's perspective. Three years ago, ANE had identified country programs for termination, but the Bureau is now adding countries. As against only two non-presence countries with USAID activities a few years ago, there are now 11 such countries and more are envisioned. No countries are targeted for phase-out. This evolution demonstrates the need for flexibility in how the Agency addresses issues involving graduation and non-presence. How USAID exits a country and when it does so remain relevant, but the

context has changed in ways that often cannot be foreseen, e.g., Indonesia, Pakistan, India. In contrast to USAID's more rigid approach three years ago, the lesson of experience is the need for flexibility.

ANE works in non-presence countries largely through NGOs, e.g., in Pakistan with the Asia Foundation, Save the Children, and the Aga Khan Foundation. Agency approval of activities in non-presence countries has not been problematic because most such activities respond to foreign policy priorities. Each case is approached essentially on an ad hoc basis; once the Agency makes a broad decision on programming in a particular country, ANE determines the specifics of what to do and how to do it. However, needs in non-presence countries are often difficult to accommodate given ANE's extremely limited budget. A major portion of the Bureau's non-presence activities are funded by the Economic Support Fund (not Development Assistance) and/or respond to specific foreign policy line items or initiatives. The reality of Bureau funding constraints governs ANE's choices to a large extent. While ANE has a programming system based on performance, the decision-making process has to be adjusted to respond to funding and budget realities.

Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR)

BHR supports activities in 143 countries, or 126 excluding the Ocean Freight Reimbursement program, offering evidence that USAID can carry out programs in places without USAID staff. Where USAID presence is light or non-existent, BHR relies heavily on partners to implement its programs. While many of these programs are small, in some cases partners are running substantial development and humanitarian efforts and have considerable flexibility in doing so. BHR's view is that rather than approaching the issue in terms of "non-presence", one should ask at the outset where the U.S. wants to have programs, the reasons why, and then decide how best to manage them, whether through a full mission, a partial one, or with no USAID staff. The choice will depend heavily on the objective of the particular program; e.g., if policy dialogue is essential, then a USAID presence will be required. At the same time, it is recognized that BHR programs are not typical: the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program, the programs of the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Office of Transition Initiatives, Food for Peace emergency programs, and the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation's Ocean Freight and Farmer-to-Farmer programs do not have the same geographic constraints applicable to development programs elsewhere in USAID.

As the number of USAID-staffed field missions has declined, issues surrounding the need for "presence" have come increasingly to bear, e.g., in the Food for Peace program. The principal issue is one of oversight in non-presence countries, where there must be an adequate comfort level on the part of Agency management. However, this appears less of an issue than in the past. Management/oversight concerns must be taken fully into account, but the need for some degree of oversight does not necessarily translate into USAID resident oversight. Where a USAID field mission is in place, BHR carries out activities that are consistent with the country strategy. However, BHR programs operate within the framework of worldwide strategic objectives; the Bureau views individual country activities in the context of these worldwide objectives. Beyond the

issues of resources and staffing, the question of how one consolidates and perpetuates people-to-people and institutional relationships, particularly in countries where continuing linkages are important for U.S. foreign policy interests, has particular relevance for BHR.

Bureau for Global Programs (G)

While many of the central issues involving non-presence are the same, there are significant differences in roles and responsibilities between the Global Bureau and the Regional Bureaus, and within the several sectoral Centers of the Global Bureau itself. The G Bureau undertakes a substantial number of activities in non-presence countries. With respect to the rationale for such activities, there appear to be four principal categories:

(1) response to global issues;

(2) response to foreign policy issues;

(3) essential research, usually through a third party; and

(4) continuation of sustainable development activities after graduation, perhaps the most controversial.

Field support programs of the Center for Democracy and Governance (DG) are geared to support of USAID's field missions, but DG increasingly has looked at field support in a broader context, i.e., how to manage programs in countries without a USAID presence, given the importance of democracy/governance activities in many of the countries from which USAID has withdrawn. In 1997, decision-making for democracy/governance activities was delegated to the Global Bureau and the process has worked well, eliminating the need to seek time-consuming and tension-producing internal waivers. The DG Center has earmarked Economic Support Funds (ESF), with a strong State Department role, which can be used in non-presence countries, as well as limited Development Assistance funds. DG tries to allocate roughly one-third to non-presence and two-thirds to presence countries, using ESF to the greatest possible extent.

The Environment Center seeks to create a setting in developing countries, particularly with respect to the private sector, that makes development possible. An example is USAID's initiative to expand the U.S.– Asia Environmental Partnership to other regions, which calls for partnering with the Department of Commerce and other private sector-oriented agencies. Non-presence countries, e.g., China, can be key to achievement of the goals of such programs. The environment sector draws into focus a key issue in dealing with non-presence: the appropriate balance between central and regional strategic objectives.

The Center for Population, Health, and Nutrition (PHN) has wrestled with issues involving non-presence for a number of years. Generally, its strategy has been to seek case-by-case exemptions to continue activities in non-presence countries such as Nigeria. No single policy-making calculus is likely to stand the test of time and reality, e.g.,

Indonesia. USAID still operates essentially on the basis of country units; yet, part of what USAID does in based on the country program, part on broader strategic objectives, and part on other considerations. Resources are allocated on the basis of these multiple factors, in a process that is highly complex, which results in NGOs, PVOs, and contractors answering to multiple masters with multiple sources of funding.

While the Global Bureau appears able to find a way to carry out its priority activities—albeit often at a high "transaction cost" in staff time and money—non-presence limitations do serve as a constraint. The G Bureau's activities are largely demand-driven by USAID's country programs, and this serves as a reality check. Most money for Global Bureau activities comes from USAID field missions, not from the G Bureau's own resources. This highlights a key dilemma: USAID's fundamental management unit is the country mission, but questions involving non-presence cannot be easily addressed in this context. Lack of funding, and the trade-offs this necessitates, is a major problem in dealing with this issue. This points to the need to identify other sources of funding, to look for new approaches and new forms of partnership. On balance, the Global Bureau favors a policy more accommodating to non-presence programming, with the caveat that USAID's essence is delivering services at the country level.

II. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Discussions with senior staff of all USAID bureaus with operational field programs suggest the following findings and observations.

Changed Policy and Programmatic Context

The USAID context for examining non-presence policy has changed significantly in the past three years. There has been an evolution from a rigidly-applied, centrally-determined "out-is-out" policy with few exceptions, to a more flexible approach. However, USAID attention and emphasis is not at present focused on country graduation and phase-out. Some regions, e.g., Asia, are moving in the opposite direction.

Diversity of Approach

Existing USAID policy, developed several years ago, is applied differentially, with significant variation among, and sometimes within, the Bureaus. LAC gives great consideration to regional and cross-border concerns. ANE responds to a large extent to foreign policy concerns. ENI has from the outset aimed at a transition to non-presence, and has a specifically-defined and systematic approach to decision-making. AFR decision-making is governed to a great degree by funding and staffing constraints. The G Bureau affords greater relative priority to global concerns, while approaches and issues differ within the Bureau itself. BHR's programs are, in major part, exceptions to the rule.

Decentralized Decision-Making Process

Decentralization of decision-making, within broad strategic parameters, has increased significantly over the past few years. With some caveats, the current USAID decision-making process for consideration of non-presence activities does not appear to be the subject of major internal Agency dissatisfaction.

Flexible Policy Guidelines

While acknowledging the usefulness of broad policy guidelines, experience demonstrates that flexibility in applying these guidelines is essential, given the significant diversity and unpredictable changes in country, regional, and programmatic contexts.

Multiple Models and Mechanisms

USAID—often working with PVOs and NGOs—has gained significant experience with a variety of models and mechanisms in planning for graduation and in carrying out activities in non-presence countries. Examples include endowments and foundations, the U.S.-Asia Environmental Program, regional approaches to programming in Africa, sharing between presence and non-presence countries and institutions in Latin America, promotion of south-to-south relationships, and binational commissions. USAID/CDIE's recent study of experience and outstanding issues involving country graduation offers many specific models and examples.

Drawing on this experience offers an important opportunity to strengthen USAID's approaches in planning and programming for country graduation or phase-out. However, this experience is not widely shared among the USAID Bureaus and within the Agency. Opportunities to benefit from PVO/NGO expertise, particularly in carrying out collaborative activities at the community level, similarly are often overlooked.

Limited Attention to USAID Legacy

With certain exceptions, USAID gives little attention in its programming to longer term planning for the period beyond graduation or phase-out, and often lacks a participatory process for doing so with its partners. More deliberate attention in program planning and design to USAID's legacy would yield benefits both in sustaining the development impact of USAID investments and in supporting foreign policy concerns. As a matter of policy, USAID, in collaboration with its partners, should examine low-cost efficient alternatives that could serve to sustain institutional and people-to-people relationships following USAID's departure from a country.

Country-Based Development Focus

USAID programming continues to be strongly based on the country development-focused, field mission-managed model. As funds and staff decrease, there is an increasing conflict or tension between programmatic strategies and operational realities. Similarly, there are unresolved trade-offs between USAID's global, regional, and country-specific objectives. Non-presence issues should be considered in this context.

Funding and Management Constraints

Funding and management considerations are driving forces in decision-making concerning non-presence programs, but they are applied in different ways in the varying regional and central bureau contexts. The overall magnitude of USAID non-presence activities is very small and subject to many limitations. USAID affords clear priority to mission-based country programs.

ANNEX 7:
GENDER PLAN OF ACTION ASSESSMENT:
SCOPE OF WORK

REALIZING THE GOALS OF THE GENDER PLAN OF ACTION: NEXT STEPS IN THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF GENDER CONCERNS IN USAID

Background

Early in 1996 the Global Bureau of USAID began working closely with the Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA) WID Subcommittee to develop for the consideration of the USAID Administrator a plan of action that would help to institutionalize the integration of gender considerations into all USAID programs and policies. A proposed plan was developed under the guidance of then-Deputy Administrator Carol Lancaster, and in close consultation with the ACVFA and each central and regional bureau. With the concurrence of all bureaus, on March 12, 1996, Administrator Atwood announced the USAID Gender Plan of Action (GPA) at a quarterly public meeting of the ACVFA.

Almost three years after the announcement of the Gender Plan of Action, later incorporating additional actions announced in June 1996, implementation of the GPA has been achieved in most areas. The Agency's strategic framework has been revised to better reflect the key role of gender issues in development. A highly successful women-in-development Fellows program has been established. IDI orientations and Agency technical training through the Global Bureau now address gender issues. The Agency's competitive assistance guidelines now include language on the importance of addressing gender issues in grants and cooperative agreements.

In addition, it has been agreed that the Office of Women and Development (WID), as the technical office responsible for WID in the Agency, will develop guidance on the qualifications for WID Officers throughout the Agency. A contract information bulletin will soon go to all contracts officers requiring them to include gender expertise in the criteria by which proposals and applications are judged when gender issues are mentioned in the scope of work. As an important companion measure, in coordination with the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, work is underway to include the GPA in the USAID Automated Directives System that replaced the Agency's policy and operational handbooks. This will provide the procedural basis for requiring that gender issues be included in *all* scopes of work.

Purpose

The ACVFA, through its Gender Working Group, has decided to sponsor an independent assessment of USAID's implementation of the GPA. The purpose of the assessment is to discern the "value added" of the GPA in systematizing USAID's longstanding and ongoing efforts to institutionalize gender considerations in its activities. The assessment has three objectives:

(1) to assess the progress that has been achieved thus far in implementing the GPA and any impact that it has had;

(2) to identify and analyze additional actions that should be considered for even greater institutionalization of gender concerns in USAID policies and programs; and

(3) to evaluate the success of the process of public/private collaboration between ACVFA and USAID in the development of the GPA to determine whether it could be a model for formulation of other USAID policies.

Among the illustrative questions the assessment will consider are the following:

1. To what extent were the actions listed in the GPA implemented?

2. Have the actions that were thought to be most useful at the time turned out to be the right ones in practice?

3. Has the way in which gender is addressed in the Agency's Strategic Plan had any effect on implementation of the GPA?

4. How and to what extent was the GPA communicated within USAID?

5. What more needs to be done to systematize and accelerate the process toward gender equitable development as intended by the GPA?

Tasks

The consultants (team leader and assistant) will conduct an assessment to document the extent to which the USAID Gender Plan of Action has been implemented and to propose additional actions or "next steps" for greater institutionalization of gender issues, taking into account the changing context in which USAID and PVOs are working. Washington-based work and field work in up to three countries, supplemented by electronic and other communication with USAID Missions, NGO representatives and other relevant individuals in a larger number of countries, will provide the opportunity to both develop and test receptivity to the recommendations for additional actions or "next steps." Work will take place during the period June 15, 1999 through March 15, 2000 approximately, and will entail the following:

1. Review of the development of the Gender Plan of Action, including a brief assessment of the context in which it was developed. This will include a review of written materials and face-to-face or telephone discussions with relevant USAID staff, ACVFA members, other PVOs, and a small number of leaders in addressing gender issues in the State Department and the donor community. Relevant background materials will be provided to the consultant(s) by the Director of the Office of Women in Development (G/WID) in the Global Bureau, other USAID Offices and ACVFA Member Organizations. A list of ACVFA members who were involved in supporting the formulation of the Plan and of USAID staff, including the Office of Women in

Development and representatives of central and regional bureaus who were asked to participate in focus groups as the Plan was developed, will be provided to the consultant(s) by G/WID.

2. Documentation of the extent to which each item in the Plan has been implemented, and what items remain "in progress" or have been made obsolete in their present form due to changes in USAID systems. This will involve interviews and discussion with senior staff of the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination, the Bureau for Management, and the Global Bureau's Office of Women in Development, in particular, as well as with staff of the Regional Bureaus. The interviews will aim to determine how each item was implemented, whether any barriers were encountered and, if pertinent, what is required to complete their implementation. Interviews/ discussions with selected PVOs/NGOs (USAID partners) will also explore their experience with USAID implementation of the GPA.

3. Documentation of the way in which the adoption of the GPA was communicated within USAID, and to whom.

4. Documentation of the process of collaboration between USAID and ACVFA in the development of the Gender Plan of Action, including an analysis of factors that contributed to the success of the collaboration and how/whether a similar process might be applicable for the development of other USAID policies in which ACVFA has an interest. This will involve interviews primarily with ACVFA members, the Director of the Office of Women in Development, and staff of BHR/PVC and PPC, but may include others as well The interviews will aim to determine how the collaboration unfolded, the existence of enabling factors and, if pertinent, difficulties that were encountered

5. Formulation of recommendations for "next steps" in the institutionalization of gender concerns in USAID and the identification of innovative or especially effective programs, projects and activities within USAID that have helped make progress on gender concerns. These recommendations will take into account existing institutional and budgetary factors, and the changing context in which USAID and PVOs are working.

Findings will be based on information collected both from those in Washington, DC and from those in the field. Fieldwork will take place after the presentation of interim findings to the Steering Committee on or about September 15, 1999 and may continue through January 2000. Field work will entail the following:

1. Field visits to up to three selected USAID Missions to:

    a. Interview USAID Mission staff to ascertain what they see as the main constraints to integration of gender considerations in their activities; how they view the actions included in the Gender Plan of Action; and what actions they think might be required to supplement the Gender Plan of Action and encourage greater integration.

b. Interview selected PVO/NGO partners, other members of the U.S. Government Country Team and representatives of other donors to explore their experience with the GPA and efforts to institutionalize the integration of gender into USAID Activities. These conversations will identify what the partners consider to be the main constraints to integration of gender considerations (drawing upon their own experience with gender institutionalization), as well as their recommendations for ways to encourage greater attention to gender in USAID activities.

The specific countries will be determined by USAID taking into account criteria to be provided by the Steering Committee.

2. Telephone interviews and Internet communication with a wider sample of contacts (U.S. Mission, PVO staff and others) , in additional countries to be identified by USAID. The aim is to supplement the findings obtained in the field visits. Again, the specific countries will be determined by USAID taking into account criteria to be provided by the Steering Committee.

Deliverables

1. Presentation of interim findings to ACVFA Gender Working Group on September 9, 1999.

2. Presentation of interim findings to the Steering Committee by September 15, 1999.

3. First Draft report submitted to the ACVFA Director and AMATECH by October 29, 1999, in hard copy and diskette in format compatible with MS Word for Office 97, [no more than 40 pages in length, including an executive summary up to 3 pages in length].

4. Second Draft report submitted to the ACVFA Director and AMATECH February 1, 2000 [no more than 50 pages of text and an additional 3–4 page executive summary].

5 Presentation of final analysis and recommendations, in separate meetings, to the ACVFA Gender Working Group and to the Steering Committee by February 15, 2000.

6. Final report submitted as above by February 28, 2000 with ACVFA, USAID and other stakeholder comments incorporated. This assumes consultants will have received comments by February 20, 2000.

7. Presentation of final analysis and recommendations at the March 2000 ACVFA Quarterly Meeting.

NOTES: